

REMARKS:

The Examiner's objection to the drawings is noted, and formal drawings will be submitted, hopefully before the Examiner reaches this Request for Continued Examination.

Claims 1 and 2 are cancelled, and new claims 3 and 4 are submitted in the RCE.

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 USC103 on Kowalski, US 4,010,914, in view of Cawte, US 5,202,435. The Examiner cites Kowalski for the storage of detonating cord on a drum or reel. The Examiner notes that Kowalski fails to teach the numerical markings on the detonating cord. The Examiner cites Cawte for the disclosure that providing numerical markings on detonating cord was known prior to the present invention.

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiners rejection for the reason that Cawte, and the prior art cited, fail to suggest the inventory method and apparatus of the present invention, whereby one can determine at a glance the length of detonating cord remaining on a reel, that reel being one of a plurality of reels.

Applicants concede that it would be within the skill of one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide incremental markings in tape measure fashion, that is in increasing order from a free end of the detonating cord coiled on a reel to the to the core of the reel. The Examiner states that using the markings taught by Cawte on the reel of Kowalski would

enable one to use the detonating cord as a tape measure. Although that may be true, the invention claimed is quite different than this "tape measure" marking of the detonating cord. More particularly, the invention claimed herein relates to an inventory control system where lengths of detonating cord are stored on a plurality of reels, each reel having the detonating with markings that allow one to determine at a glance, the length of detonating cord remaining on each reel. Contrary to the Examiners suggestion, Cawte would not inherently display information as to the length of detonating cord remaining on a drum or reel. Cawte suggests instead that the incremental markings on the reel be repeated in a sequence such that the indicia would run from zero to fifty, and then repeat zero to fifty (or zero to some other predetermined maximum number). Applicant notes that this maximum number will always be considerably less than the overall length of detonating cord stored on a reel in the inventory control system of the present invention. In fact, Cawte suggests that this maximum number be on the order of the maximum depth for the hole in which the detonating cord will be placed. Clearly, Cawte suggests only the "tape measure" referred to by the Examiner. Cawte does not teach the essential element of the present invention whereby the markings on the detonating cord run from a maximum at the free end of the cord to a minimum at the inner core of the drum, and in equal increments between there. Such a marking arrangement provides an inventory control system that allows one to quickly ascertain detonating cord availability from reels commonly having up to 1000 feet of detonating cord.

Applicant does not seek to patent the rather straight - forward tape measure feature whereby detonating cord can be marked along its length. Rather,


applicant's invention relates instead to a particular marking system that provides an improved inventory control system and method whereby one can determine visually and in a very convenient fashion the total quantity of detonating cord remaining on a plurality of reels. This invention differs radically from the "tape measure" use of the detonating cord disclosed in Cawte. The regulation of explosives, such as detonating cord, has come under increased scrutiny since September 11, 2001. Accurate inventory of explosives and detonating cord is now considered of paramount importance to the Federal Government. The Bureau of Alcohol Firearms Tobacco and Explosives now insists that all users maintain accurate inventory counts at all times. Audits can occur at any time by this federal agency.

In summary, the present invention relates to an inventory control system wherein each reel stored in inventory is marked so that the numerical indicia at the free end of the cord on each reel provides an accurate indication of the detonating cord remaining on that particular reel. The Examiner will recognize that prior art reels upon which detonating cord is provided, and as shown in Kowalski for example, provide detonating cord in lengths not readily determined. This creates a problem to which applicants invention has provided a solution. While the prior art patent to Cawte does suggest indicia on detonating cord, there is no suggestion in this prior art patent of solving the above identified inventory control problem. The Examiner is urged not to use applicants disclosure as a template from which to recreate the claimed invention. Such an approach has often been condemned by the Board of Appeals and the Courts in applying the obviousness standard from 35 USC Section 103.

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Favorable consideration of this application is earnestly solicited in light of these remarks, and in view of the amendment to the claims submitted herewith..

Respectfully submitted,

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